

READING GROUP GUIDE

My Friend Anne Frank by Hannah Pick-Goslar

1. Hannah's memoir provides a first-hand look at the atrocities and suffering endured by countless children during the Holocaust. Reflect on the impact of war on children's lives and the long-term effects it can have. How do you think Hannah's experiences shaped her outlook on life and influenced her actions after the war?
2. *My Friend Anne Frank* begins by portraying Hannah's childhood as carefree and joyful, despite the increasingly oppressive circumstances of the Nazi occupation. Discuss the significance of friendship during times of adversity. How did Hannah and Anne's friendship provide solace and support for them? Can you think of other examples of friendship that have played a similar role in history or literature?
3. How do Hannah's perspective and recollections enhance your understanding of Anne Frank's life and experiences? In what ways does Hannah's story complement or differ from what you know about Anne Frank's diary?
4. Hannah and her family were forced to flee Nazi Germany and seek refuge in Amsterdam. They are later imprisoned at Westerbork transit camp and ultimately the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Explore the impact of displacement and exile on individuals and families during the Holocaust. How does Hannah's experience shed light on the challenges faced by refugees and the complexities of growing up without the stability of a home?
5. Hannah's younger sister, Gabi, was born under Nazi occupation. She was not even three years old when the family was forced into Westerbork and around five years old when they were liberated. On the other hand, Hannah was a teenager during World War II. How did experiencing the Holocaust at different stages of childhood affect them differently? How were they affected in the same way?

6. “In Judaism, we learn that there’s hope for redemption and seeing God’s light, no matter how black and bleak the hour seems.” (p. 179) What are some ways that the Jewish faith and community offered solace during life in the concentration camps?
7. Discuss the fateful reunion between Hannah and Anne at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. How did this reunion affect Hannah's understanding of her own survival and her memories of Anne?
8. Reflect on Hannah’s journey on “The Lost Train” and ultimately to liberation. How do you think Hannah’s newfound freedom affected her relationships with those not imprisoned during the Holocaust? How about those who shared her experience?
9. When Hannah first reads Anne’s diaries she says, “They were a revelation. I lost my best friend Anne when she has just turned 13 and began keeping her diary. In those pages, I felt like I was reunited with her.” (p. 258) Conversely, *My Friend Anne Frank* is Hannah’s first-hand account of her life during the Holocaust. What is the importance of sharing these personal narratives in preserving the memory of historical events?
10. Consider the relevance and importance of Holocaust literature in today's world. How can stories like Hannah Pick-Goslar's serve as a reminder and a warning against the dangers of intolerance, discrimination, and totalitarianism? What lessons can we learn from her experiences and apply to our own lives?